

CABINET MEMBER FOR PLANNING, REGENERATION & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

RECORD OF DECISIONS taken by the Cabinet Member for Planning, Regeneration & Economic Development, Councillor Donna Jones, at her meeting held on Wednesday, 8 March 2017 at 9.30 am in Conference Room A - Civic Offices

Present

Councillor Donna Jones (in the chair)

Councillor Yahiya Chowdhury
Councillor Ben Dowling
Councillor Colin Galloway

Officers

Claire Upton-Brown, Assistant Director of Culture and City Development
Selina Crocombe, Planning Policy Manager

5. Declarations of Members' Interests (AI 1)

There were no declarations of members' interests.

6. Apologies for Absence (AI 2)

There were no apologies for absence.

7. Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Scoping Report (AI 3)

(TAKE IN REPORT)

The Planning Policy Manager, Selina Crocombe introduced the report. She explained that the Strategic Environmental Assessment is integrated with a Sustainability Appraisal at each stage of the Local Plan. The Portsmouth Local Plan needs to contribute to the principles of sustainable development (set out in Section 19 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004) by carrying out a Sustainability Appraisal of each of the proposals in a Local Plan. These combined requirements are known as a Sustainability Appraisal or SA.

She said that this Scoping Report is the first stage of the four stages of the Sustainability Appraisal process. Further documents will accompany each part in the production of the Local Plan. An Equalities Impact Assessment is included as part of this process related to the Council's duties under the Equalities Act 2010 and the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The SA considers ways in which the Local Plan can contribute to improvements in the environmental, social and economic conditions in Portsmouth, when judged

against reasonable alternatives. These cover a wide range of issues as set out in paragraph 3.3 of the report.

Ms Crocombe further explained that the SA scoping report sets out the areas the Local Plan needs to cover and identifies where land use planning decisions can have an impact. The document has been informed by other relevant policies, plans, programmes & sustainability objectives (known as the baseline information). The Sustainability Appraisal Framework based on the framework provided by the Scoping Report, will be used to assess the strategy, policies and site allocations in the Local Plan at each of its different stages.

The SA Scoping Report has been consulted upon with Natural England, The Environment Agency and Historic England for a 5 week period. A summary of the comments made by the three statutory agencies and the changes proposed to the document are attached as Appendix 1. The Scoping Report incorporating the proposed changes is attached as Appendix 2.

The decision today is to agree the revised scoping report.

In response to a query, it was confirmed that post Brexit, all European law would become British Law and then Parliament would decide over a period of years which to keep and which not to keep. So the European SEA will still apply for a number of years. The Council has to comply with the laws that are currently in force.

Members congratulated officers on the report and the way the information had been presented. Members were pleased that the comments made during the consultation with the three statutory agencies mentioned above had been addressed.

Officers asked that in view of the length of the report they could amend any typographical errors that were noticed. This was agreed provided that the sense of the wording was not changed.

DECISION:

That the Leader of the Council with responsibilities for Planning, Regeneration and Economic Development approved the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report incorporating the changes following consultation with the statutory bodies.

8. Fixing our broken housing market - Housing White Paper (AI 4)

(TAKE IN INFORMATION ONLY REPORT)

The Assistant Director of Culture and City Development explained that the report was being brought for information only. She explained that the proposals in the White Paper set out how the Government intends to boost

housing supply and, over the longer term, create a more efficient housing market whose outcomes more closely match the needs and aspirations of all households and which supports wider economic prosperity. Consultation on the White Paper closes on 2nd May 2017.

The White Paper invites consultation responses against 38 questions and will run for 12 weeks with all responses submitted by 2nd May. The Assistant Director of Culture and City Development will draft responses to the questions in consultation with the Leader of the Council with responsibilities for PRED.

The Assistant Director of Culture and City Development said that although there were positive changes, there was a view that the White Paper does not go far enough. It could be far more ambitious in terms of the support it offers to Local Authorities who, with the right support and flexibility, could do far more to build, or enable, the genuinely affordable homes that the people at the "sharp end" of the housing crisis need.

A query was raised about how and whether it would be possible to change the current appeals system that referred matters to the Planning Director in Bristol as local decisions have been overturned to the detriment of the City in the view of many local people. It was acknowledged that there does need to be an appeals process, but that the current process did not appear to be working for Portsmouth. In addition, concerns were expressed about the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as this could also fetter local plans. Local elected members were frustrated in their Planning decisions as often they had no choice over what to approve because of the constraints placed on them either by the NPPF or because they know what will be overturned on appeal.

The Leader with responsibilities for PRED said that the report before PRED today had also been sent to the Cabinet Member for Housing, Councillor Steve Wemyss, as a similar report was also going to his decision meeting. He was also due to meet with the Housing Minister and although the meeting was mainly about the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) he would also be proposing a response to the White Paper.

Members thanked the officers for their report.

The meeting concluded at 9.50 am.

Councillor Donna Jones
Leader of the Council with responsibilities for PRED